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House of Representatives

The House met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. CRAMER).

DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Speaker:

WASHINGTON, DC,
October 30, 2013.

I hereby appoint the Honorable KEVIN CRAMER to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

JOHN A. BOEHNER,
Speaker of the House of Representatives.

MORNING-HOUR DEBATE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 3, 2013, the Chair will now recognize Members from lists submitted by the majority and minority leaders for morning-hour debate.

The Chair will alternate recognition between the parties, with each party limited to 1 hour and each Member other than the majority and minority leaders and the minority whip limited to 5 minutes each, but in no event shall debate continue beyond 11:50 a.m.

MILITARY BUDGET WOES

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas (Mr. WILLIAMS) for 5 minutes.

Mr. WILLIAMS. Mr. Speaker, it is a sad day in America when Army Secretary John McHugh says that, in today's fiscal environment, the best case scenario for our military's budget is treacherous. Army Chief of Staff Ray Odierno said budget cuts hamper the military's ability to train its own troops.

While there is waste and overlap in every Federal agency—the Pentagon's budget not excluded—there is much to

be said for Congress' doing its primary job of governing: passing a budget. For the last 4 years, we have seen the constraints that continuing resolution after continuing resolution have placed on our military.

Earlier this year, we saw the rigid requirements that harmed the Department of Defense when President Obama's sequester took place. Before these cuts, the nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office said our defense program was already underfunded by 5 percent with modernization underfunded by 10 percent. Thankfully, Congress took quick action that allowed the DOD to operate under a budget in order to meet all of their fiscal requirements and have more flexibility as they absorbed the across-the-board sequester cuts.

General Odierno revealed this week that just two Army brigades are combat-ready and that training has come to a halt. This is a terrifying reality given that only 2 months ago President Obama addressed Congress and the public, asking for support for a military attack on Syria. We absolutely cannot send our troops who are not trained, not equipped, and not prepared into harm's way. Our military readiness should never, ever be threatened like this. As the world's superpower, our Armed Forces must be ready to deploy thousands of troops should the need arise.

As the military continues finding ways to operate under current spending levels, it is also downsizing in Afghanistan and is preparing for future programs with no certainty of any financial stability. Our Nation has serious financial problems. Our deficit is growing; our spending is increasing; and it seems that, in nearly every budget battle, our military is thrown in as a bargaining chip. This is not the American way, and it must become a thing of the past. Other government agencies have bloated budgets with wasteful, overlap-

ping programs, fraudulent spending, and blatant abuse of taxpayer dollars. All the while, our military budget is being stripped to its bare bones.

The last time I checked, Mr. Speaker, we were still a Nation at war. Now is not the time to gut essential programs for our warriors and their families. We owe it to our military to have them operate under regular order, pass and conference our appropriations bills so our fighters can continue to be the best and the most prepared in the world.

Texas' 25th District is home to Fort Hood, the Army's premier installation to train and deploy heavy forces, and it is one of the largest military installations in the world. Fort Hood ranks highest in terms of future capability and support, and it can sustain more than 50,000 soldiers and their families.

I urge my colleagues in Congress to honor our commitment to these troops and to put an end to the financial uncertainty in the military. Let's simply do just the right thing.

May God bless our troops. May God bless America.

And always in God we trust.

BUDGET CONFEREES

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. HOYER) for 5 minutes.

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, budget conferees are now meeting—or will be meeting shortly—to negotiate a budget for the remainder of this fiscal year, and they have a real opportunity to look beyond that mission and to lay the groundwork for a long-term solution to our deficits that is balanced and restores certainty to our economy.

What we do not need are more gimmicks and partisan games like we will have today, frankly. We are going to have a vote on the resolution which is disapproving of the raising of the debt limit. Everybody knows that is not a real vote, and almost everybody on this

□ This symbol represents the time of day during the House proceedings, e.g., □ 1407 is 2:07 p.m.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.



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